

will ensure that students making the transition from middle to high school have an opportunity to participate in service programs. By increasing the education award, the bill allows young service participants to apply the skills that they learn in volunteerism to a successful education. The benefits of service will continue to accrue to volunteers even after they complete their service.

Madam Speaker, as a result of the great work of the AmeriCorps members, extraordinary things are happening all over America. The corporation supports such important nonprofit organizations as Habitat for Humanity, City Year, and Red Cross.

National service participants have built homes, healed wounds, and taught elementary school kids. These volunteers are part of the backbone of our country. With very little funding, service participants leverage millions of dollars and perform crucial work in classrooms, national parks, and areas of our Nation hit by disaster.

As a result, I hope my colleagues will support the rule and the underlying legislation. The spirit of service that is so important to all of our communities is one that should be encouraged and supported.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. I would like to thank my friend, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MATSUI), for the time and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In a world often plagued by selfishness, those who commit themselves to the service of others through volunteerism really serve as a beacon of compassion and hope for all.

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Community service is one of the most gratifying, rewarding, fulfilling ways people can give back to their communities. Community service has always been a vital pillar of our society. Volunteers all over the Nation dedicate millions of hours to their contemporaries, all in the hope of making people's lives better. Through their selfless work and tireless effort, volunteers help improve the lives of millions of Americans.

In 1993, Congress, with my support, passed legislation creating AmeriCorps and the Corporation for National and Community Service to administer and coordinate Federal community service programs. Since then, almost 500,000 Americans have served with thousands of nonprofit organizations, public agencies, and faith-based organizations nationwide.

These citizens tutor and mentor children, they coordinate after-school programs, they build homes for the needy, they conduct neighborhood patrols, restore the environment, respond to disasters, build nonprofit capacity, recruit and manage volunteers. They do, oftentimes, exemplary work.

The underlying legislation, Madam Speaker, H.R. 2857, the Generations Invigorating Volunteerism and Education Act, known as the GIVE Act, will reauthorize the national service programs administered by the Cooperation for National Community Service. This reauthorization will help increase the number of volunteers in AmeriCorps to over 100,000 by 2012. It will also create service opportunities for middle school and high school students through the Summer of Service program.

The legislation emphasizes the critical role of service in meeting the national priorities of emergency and disaster preparedness. I do believe it will help improve program integrity.

I am pleased that the committee, the Committee on Education and Labor, worked in a bipartisan manner to reauthorize this program and to include provisions that will make these programs more effective and efficient, responding to State and local needs, and performance-oriented. It goes to show, Madam Speaker, that when we are willing to work together and negotiate, we can bring forth good pieces of legislation with bipartisan support.

Now, I know the majority is trumpeting this rule with which we bring this underlying legislation to the floor because it will allow Members to debate all the amendments to the Rules Committee. But I remind my colleagues, Madam Speaker, the majority does this only when the underlying legislation is noncontroversial, even though the majority promised to be the most open Congress in history. If the majority is so proud of this rule, it should allow open rules on controversial bills as well.

In closing, Madam Speaker, I urge Americans everywhere, regardless of whether they take part in a AmeriCorps, to volunteer and give back to their communities. The rewards are extraordinary to both the volunteer and to the community. As Winston Churchill said, "We make a living by what we do, but we make a life by what we give."

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. MATSUI. I would like to inquire of the gentleman from Florida if he has any remaining speakers.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. We have no other speakers. I am ready to make my final remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida is recognized.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Although the reauthorization of AmeriCorps certainly is an important matter and one that deserves our attention, I must express my disappointment that the majority decided to take up this legislation before we finish our work on bipartisan legislation to protect Americans from international terrorism.

On February 14, the majority decided to leave Washington to take a Presi-

dent's Day recess and allowed the Protect America Act to expire 2 days later, rendering U.S. intelligence officials unable to begin new terrorist surveillance without cumbersome bureaucratic hurdles. Because of the inaction of the majority, the United States is more vulnerable to terrorist attack.

This didn't have to happen, Madam Speaker. Earlier last month, the Senate passed, by a bipartisan vote, really an extraordinary vote of 68-29, a bill updating the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, FISA, a bill that the chairman, Democratic chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee said, and I quote, "is the right way to go in terms of the security of the Nation."

We could have easily considered that legislation, but the majority in the House instead decided to head home. The House should vote on the Senate measure, and the House should vote on the Senate measure now.

Madam Speaker, we must always try to stay one step ahead of those who wish to harm Americans. Now is not the time to in any way tie the hands of our intelligence community. The modernization of the foreign intelligence surveillance is a critical national security priority.

I am pleased that several of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle also agree. On January 28, 21 members of the Blue Dog Coalition, Democrats, sent a letter to the distinguished Speaker in support of the Senate Rockefeller-Bond FISA legislation. The letter states, and I quote, "The Rockefeller-Bond FISA legislation contains satisfactory language addressing all these issues, and we fully support that measure, should it reach the House floor without substantial change. We believe these components will ensure a strong national security apparatus that can thwart terrorism across the globe and save American lives here in our country."

Today, I will give all Members of the House an opportunity to vote on the bipartisan long-term modernization of FISA. I call on all my colleagues, including the members of the Blue Dog Coalition that signed the letter to the distinguished Speaker, to join with me in defeating the previous question so that we can immediately move to concur in the Senate amendment and send the bill to the President to be signed into law.

I remind my colleagues that defeating the previous question will not prohibit consideration of the underlying legislation being brought to the floor today, the GIVE Act, but would merely require that we first take a vote on FISA modernization.

Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have the text of the amendment and extraneous material inserted into the RECORD prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.